

The Woman's Column.

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The Woman's Column.

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PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY VS. THE RED CROSS.

Only the fearless and intelligent women who opened the way for the army of women who now serve as physicians and trained nurses can fully comprehend the "trades-union jealousy" which seeks to block their path. There have always been wide-minded and liberal physicians, free from this proscriptive spirit, just men who have given their aid and encouragement to struggling merit, irrespective of sex. But, after all, these noble men have been exceptions to the rule. Here in America, to a considerable extent, this obstacle has been surmounted, and women are now very generally admitted as students in medical schools and as members of medical societies. But in the army and navy the prejudice still lingers in influential quarters.

The latest instance is in the action of Surgeon-General Sternberg, whose conspicuous incapacity has been painfully shown in his failure to supply adequate aid to our wounded soldiers. According to ample testimony of competent critics, the Red Cross Society, under Clara Barton, with her trained subordinates of both sexes, has rendered most efficient and valuable aid, established the first well-equipped and well-managed hospital, and even furnished the army physicians with necessary supplies which had not been provided by the regular authorities. But instead of giving the Red Cross Society credit for its disinterested aid, this incompetent official resents their coöperation, and regards their presence as an interference.

The *Boston Transcript* calls attention to this unworthy proceeding in the following excellent editorial:

NOBODY ASKS HIS APPROVAL.

The covert sneers of Surgeon-General Sternberg at the Red Cross are in accord with Secretary Alger's brutal comment on the criticism of his bungling management of relief for the wounded—that "war is war, and it is best to have it so"—but not with the enlightened public sentiment regarding the work and record of that organization. Sternberg is reported as saying: "I have never wanted Red Cross nurses at the front, for I do not think that that is the place for women, and the Red Cross people have pushed themselves in." Doubtless they have pushed themselves in, and it is their business to do so in crises like the present. They have brought de-

votion, energy, and skill to this service which uplifts humanity as much as war degrades it. They have a world-wide commission to relieve human suffering, and one Red Cross nurse on the *Seneca* was worth all the other agencies at work for the mitigation of the distress on board.

It is not for any surgeon-general, even be he an official who shows the highest ability in his technical capacity, to say whether the front is the place for women or not. It is for them to decide whether they will incur the dangers, and, if necessary, make the sacrifices. When men go to the front to fight, it seems eminently proper that women should go there to nurse, and it is safe to say that any advance which we may have made since our last previous war in prompt and intelligent care of our sick and wounded, is due in a much larger degree to the efforts of the Red Cross than to any medical officialism. The people who have done so much to promote this advance are the people best qualified to apply the new and more humane methods, even though professional bourbonism may wince a little.

If the regular medical and surgical army authorities had done their full duty, the private liberality of our citizens would not have been needed to fit out "hospital ships" to supplement deficiencies.

HENRY B. BLACKWELL.

MRS. LIVERMORE ON WOMEN'S VOICES.

Mrs. Mary A. Livermore writes to the *Woman's Journal*:

A very sensible request has recently appeared in *Woman's Work for Woman*,—the foreign missionary magazine of the Presbyterian Women's Boards. One of its correspondents begs the editor to request the women missionaries when they speak in public "not to talk behind a veil." With untrained voices lacking carrying power, the closely drawn veil has a deadening as well as a beclouding effect, and the face of the speaker is not only concealed, which is always a mistake, but her voice becomes inaudible. The correspondent might have gone farther, and requested the women who speak at public meetings not to wear the high and ungraceful collar, which is the fashion of the day, which cramps the muscles of the throat and chest, which in public speech require full freedom.

Within a month, the writer has attended a women's meeting where one of the speakers delivered a twenty minutes' address, with a white semi-transparent veil tightly drawn over her face. It completely disguised her to most of her audience. She might almost as well have worn a mask. A high collar tightly encased her throat, and although she spoke with her head thrown back at quite an angle, she could not make herself heard. The presiding officer, as well as the audience, kindly urged her to "speak louder." She poised her head still farther back, pitched her voice on a higher key, and made great efforts to send forth a full volume of

sound, but to no purpose. A tumult of words seemed struggling in her throat, but were hindered by the restricting collar. One longed to aid her with a few sharp spats on the back, as we do choking children.

We all know how much the sense of hearing is assisted when the eye sees the words articulated. And we have continually before us the example of the professional vocalists, actresses and speakers, who are trained for their work, who never sing or speak behind veils, and who not only will not impair vocal efforts by a high collar, but wear gowns cut low, so that throat and chest may have perfect freedom. One would suppose that good sense would teach women new to the business of public speaking to follow their methods.

The organizations of women to-day are very numerous. We are organized to death. Clubs and leagues, orders and chapters, unions and lodges, corps and branches have us fast in their toils. We are "everlastingly" "attending a meeting" with a pertinacious zeal that our foremothers in their godly "other-worldliness" never knew. If the meeting is a large one, one may be sure in advance that fully half the exercises will be inaudible, and will appear to be only pantomime. Not such pantomime as the Revells used to give us, with an accompaniment of music that illustrated the voiceless drama, so that words were unnecessary to its interpretation; but a pantomime made up of fruitless efforts to be heard, with gesticulations of irritation and facial expressions of embarrassment.

It is expected that the women who read papers and make addresses at our public meetings shall give us the best of their thought and scholarship, their wisdom and experience. Shall we not add to these requirements the charm of audible speech, distinct articulation, and pleasing delivery?

FORTUNATE IRISH WOMEN.

The Irish Local Government Bill, as amended in committee, will give the owner, service, and lodger franchise to women in Ireland, and will also—read in connection with the orders in council issued under it—assure to them, whether married or unmarried, the right to serve on district councils, both rural and urban, and on boards of guardians, on either the local, electoral or the residential qualification. This is an important advance. Until the residential qualification was given in England, the number of women guardians remained below 200. It now exceeds 900. The *Review of Reviews* says of the residential qualification: "It will permit the candidature of many personally highly qualified women, who would otherwise be shut out from public administrative work."

WHEN TO STOP WORK.

My neighbor was fully sixty years of age, but she had never thought of being old till some new acquaintance suggested it to her.

"Of course you are not using your brush now," one of them said, confidently. They had just been admiring a fine landscape, some of her work.

The truth met her in the face like a blow. She was too old.

"Certainly, I am using my brush now, just as I have done for years; not as a business, but because I love it," she replied with spirit. "What should I do? Why should I give it up?"

And yet, in spite of this brave answer, she shivered, and shrank within herself, and felt a cold wave of loneliness and discouragement creep over her being.

"I, getting old!" she said, inwardly. "And where is my life work? It is not done; it seems scarcely begun. I have all my life been so anxious to do something with my pen, but have always been so full of work and care, I am ashamed of the little accomplished; and now, when my heart is desolate and my hands empty, and I would fain fill up the remnant of life with the work which has been so long knocking at my door, behold! I am old; and people think it wonderful that I ever use my brush. What would they say could they know that I am still earnest and ambitious to use my pen to some effect in the world?"

She had been a devoted mother; but now, of her children, some were in heaven, and some scattered over the earth, and she acknowledged to herself: "Come to think, I am old; it may be my mental powers are declining, and perhaps I am foolish to keep on trying. The results which I have longed to achieve need more years and more strength," she sadly admitted; for it is sad and hard to give up setting the fleshly feet upon the hills of the land of promise. So, with the discouraging conviction that it was too late in life to do anything of consequence, little by little, with many sighs and regrets, the struggle for improvement and excellence was, if not given up, carried on without much method or energy.

But, as it turned out, she lived on and on; and came to seventy, bright and strong—brighter and stronger than at sixty, because her health was better, and she was also keeping pace with the times, her heart pulsing with the pulses of the world, and full of thoughts and helpful suggestions from the experience of years; but having given up effort in writing, she had lost facility and power in expression, and she sometimes thought regretfully: "If I had only known how well I was going to be, and kept right on, I might have made people listen to me by this time; and there is so much I would like to say; but now it is surely too late to start up afresh; it is certain I have but little time left."

So the years went on, and with undimmed intelligence and a pretty strong body came the dawning of her eightieth year.

"I am aged now," she told herself, "there can be no question about it; but only to think that twenty years ago, when

I was only sixty, I was discouraged because people thought me 'old,' and now it is plain that I might have made all these years count for much more than they have done, had I kept right on, with method and determination, and not been influenced by the thought of age. Twenty years! but now—"

So the years went on again, and she was really aged before the Lord Jesus called her home; and the first thing when she reached heaven, He asked her: "What have you been doing these last twenty-five years to help my children on the earth, for whom I gave my life? I gave you those years, with some strength and talent, that you might use them in helping along my work. What have you done with those years?"

Then, full of regret, she had to tell over the story—of strong intent to go on with her work, and of finally yielding to discouragement because there was so little time left, and she might be called away or not have strength to finish. And the sorrowful answer came:

"Did you not read my order, 'Occupy till I come?' How did you know you would not have time? There is no world in the universe that needs help as does the earth, which was your scene of labor. Adverse pens keep busy; it is sad that yours should have stopped, for you little know the influence for good you might have exerted had you continued the effort."

Oh, my neighbor saw it all now. If she only had those twenty-five years to live over again!

In the extremity of regret she came to herself, and found it was a dream—or the twenty-five years were a dream. She was still on the earth, a woman of sixty; and joyfully she arose and went to her work with all the enthusiasm of youth, resolving never to lay down the implements of labor while her hands could hold them. She would go on with her pen, with her brush, and her music, and make them all serve the Lord, never asking whether there were time, never hesitating because she was old; she would not think of age.

What is "old," but the tabernacle growing frail and withered, while the dweller within may be growing more beautiful, with deeper sympathies and wider vision—yea, a vision that reaches on, beyond the clouds of earth, catching the radiance of the immortal hills and reflecting here their glory?—*H. N. F., in N. Y. Evangelist.*

AN UP-TO-DATE GIRL.

The Chicago *Tribune* tells the following story:

Shortly after the troopship *Panther* anchored off Tompkinsville, a girl in a pink shirt-waist appeared on the end of the wharf with a signal flag and proceeded to wigwag at the ship. Many strange sights of war have the *Panther's* men seen since they left this port for Cuba, but girls in pink shirt-waists who stand on docks and wigwag code signals to Uncle Sam's fighting ships are not included in their list of experiences. After the officers had decided that they were awake and in possession of their senses, they discovered that the girl was signalling that there was an official message for the ship. A boat was

sent in and the message, which was from Washington, was brought out.

Later on one of the officers who went ashore found the wigwagger in the telegraph office busily ticking off a message.

"What is your ship's call?" she asked.

"A. P., I believe," said the officer.

"No; that is the *St. Paul's*," replied the girl.

"Oh, yes; I had forgotten. It's A. T. How do you happen to understand wigwagging?"

"Oh, I've taken it up for convenience since the war began," said the girl, and went back to her ticking.

A SUFFRAGE STRAW.

Mrs. Virginia D. Young, president of the South Carolina W. S. A., was recently in Washington as a member of the South Carolina Press Association, the only woman member of the party. Mrs. Young gave the *Tribune* a bit of news which shows the trend of public sentiment in her State towards woman suffrage. She was invited the week before to speak at a public meeting in the open air, and considered the occasion of such importance that she was willing to be one day late for the press meeting rather than miss it. Her subject was "Women in the Wars of the United States," and, as she says, it adapted itself readily to arguments in favor of woman suffrage. Every point she made on this line was applauded, and the crowd drew near in their enthusiasm. At the close they gave three cheers, and a fourth, for Mrs. Young, and some of the most conservative women told her afterwards she had made them feel of more value than they ever had before. Mrs. Young accompanied her husband to Buffalo, and thence to Canada.—*Woman's Tribune.*

A RAILROAD QUEEN.

For thirty years we have heard a good deal of "railroad kings"—men whose genius for organization has been successfully employed in the construction of railroads. According to the *New York Commercial* of July 18, we are likely to have a railroad queen in California. The *Commercial* says:

Mrs. Annie Kline Rikert, of California, is likely to make quite a name for herself in the railroad and financial world, as she has succeeded in surveying a line for a railroad now under construction, and has organized the company and financed the project. The name of the road is the Stockton & Tuolumne, and Mrs. Rikert is the president of the company, which was formed with a capital of \$1,000,000, of which \$6,000 was paid in. In 1897 the necessary charter was obtained, and the line is now well under way.

Mrs. Rikert was born in Mississippi, her father being a wealthy planter, and she was educated at Nashville, Tenn. After graduating she continued her studies, being specially interested in geology and law. Circumstances took her to California, and prospecting on horseback and its inconveniences led her to project the railroad.

The Stockton & Tuolumne will be sixty miles long, and will traverse a rich mining district that extends to the entrance of the timber country, and direct connection with lines leading to the East is regarded as a possibility. For years an effort has been made to locate a pass through the Sierra Nevada Mountains other than the one occupied by the Southern Pacific, and it

A FAMOUS OLD NURSE.

Mrs. Florence Craven, an honorary associate of the Order of St. John, is, with the exception of Miss Nightingale, the oldest trained nurse in England. Outside of royalties, she has probably more decorations than any other woman in the empire. She spent many years in the hospitals of Holland, Denmark, Germany, and France. When the Franco-Prussian War broke out, she volunteered for ambulance work, and was placed in charge of a fever station of the Tenth Army Corps before Metz. She had charge also of the Empress Frederick's lazaretto for wounded soldiers at Homburg. Mrs. Craven possesses a cross surmounted by the royal crown of Prussia, the decoration being specially designed for her by the Empress Frederick, then crown princess. The grand duchess of Baden conferred another decoration—a red cross on a white background, surmounted by the imperial eagle. Perhaps the most remarkable of the distinctions she has received is the Iron Cross, the order of merit presented by William I. of Germany, for distinguished services in time of war. She further received the war medal presented by the first German emperor, for services in the war of 1870.

SILK CULTURE FOR WOMEN.

There is a fine collection of silkworms at the reformatory prison for women in Sherborn, Mass. The superintendent, Mrs. Ellen C. Johnson, is enthusiastic in the work. Some months since she received from the agricultural department of Japan 100,000 eggs of the silkworm, which were transmitted in the mails inside of pasteboard rolls. They have hatched finely. In two of the rooms at the reformatory the silkworms may be seen devouring large quantities of mulberry leaves, which are produced in one of the parks connected with the institution. A few of the more trusty prisoners are employed in taking care of the silkworms.

HE WANTS THE EARTH.

A correspondent of the *Boston Globe* writes:

The woman's suffrage movement which, happily, is rapidly sinking out of sight, is one of the most absurd farces that has ever been presented upon the stage of this mundane sphere. The Bible refers to woman as simply a "helpmeet," and all history teaches us that such is and should be her true position. The ideal woman, to my mind, is one who can and will bend every energy towards the advancement of man, aiding him in all his various undertakings, even sacrificing, when necessary, her own personal comfort and enjoyment for his interest, thus contributing to the general welfare of the world at large, for as man advances, so does the world advance. This is a great and glorious world, and all that it contains is intended for the improvement and elevation of man.

This was the opinion of the sailors on *La Bourgogne*, who took the boats and rafts for themselves, and left the women and children to drown. American men in general, however, do not regard such conduct as tending to "the improvement and elevation of man." Amiable persons of either sex are ready to sacrifice their

own comfort to that of others; but when it is laid down as a principle that women ought always to sacrifice themselves for men, the person who makes the claim merely shows himself amusingly far from an ideal man.

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL.

GENEROUS OFFER FROM MRS. DIAZ.

BELMONT, MASS., JULY 26, 1898.

Editor *Woman's Column*:

I have received your circulars asking for aid in hospital supplies for our soldiers. While I can offer neither money nor materials, yet I will gladly give my services in the way of talks or readings (as in case of your last fair), could money be raised by these, not too far from Boston, in parlors, halls, reading-rooms, at watering places or elsewhere. If you will print the enclosed circular, it may meet with response.

ABBY MORTON DIAZ.

The list of Mrs. Diaz's lectures and readings is as follows:

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1st. The Relation of Human Beings to the Universal. Obligations Entailed. Lessons from Nature Showing Law of Life. Law of Individuality. Law of Oneness. Our Disobedience. Penalty.

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3d. Human Values the Wealth of the State, Child Culture its Safeguard. Responsibility for These, of the Home, of the School. Methods. Parental Enlightenment the First Step. How to be Secured.

4th. Spiritual Laws Shown the Only Sure Basis of Life, Health, Right Living, and the Solution of the Whole Human Problem. Vibrations. Thought as Power. Mental Hospitality. "Get Understanding."

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OTHER TOPICS

1st. Women's Clubs, their Value to the Home and the Community.

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3d. The Four Hindrances in the Way of the World's Betterment.

4th. Social and Political Economics.

5th. Homes and Home-makers.

6th. Story of the Plymouth Pilgrims, humorous Readings from her "William Henry Letters" and the "Bybury Book," the latter pertaining chiefly to the household.

Several Armenian young men wish for places to do house or farm work. Most of them speak more or less English, and some are exceptionally good workers.

"Wyoming, an equal suffrage State, sends thrice her quota to the war. Woman suffrage evidently means no dearth of fighting men," says the *New Orleans Picayune*.

Miss Anthony writes from Rochester, N. Y.: "It is just forty-five years since I broke the spell of woman's 'keeping silence' in the N. Y. State Teachers' Convention in this city—July, 1853—and they meet here this week. I hope to look in upon them."

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